

12 things I learned as an engineer at Large Defense Contractor Inc. Choose any one they are all the same unionized lootership.

[AEROSPACE]

If you spend any time at all job hunting, you're bound to come across positions in the defense industry. I spent a little over five years as an engineer at Large Defense Contractor Inc. I learned quite a bit, and had a chance to see and do things I probably wouldn't have had the chance to do elsewhere.



That said, I felt I learned many lessons that, in hindsight, I wish I knew when starting the job. So, here's a list of 12 things I learned after spending 5+ years as an engineer in the trenches at Big Defense Contractor Inc.

#1: Job #1 of the entire defense industry is to be a jobs program. Anything that creates more jobs (bureaucracy, inefficiencies, etc) is a feature, not a bug. At the same time, the goal is to create a larger quantity of jobs, not quality. **If given the choice of retaining one good, experienced, engineer for \$120k, or hiring two fresh grads at \$80k each, they'll go with the two fresh grads, every time, then rob the taxpayer cleaning up their mistakes and inexperience before they leave with those experiences for better. Most are unionized. Unions are collectivist socialism that stifle and kill innovation, efficiency, create losses, incompetence, inefficiency and more do nothing wasteful tasks and processes that destroy competition, economies and companies. These bureaucracies are very inefficient. In private concerns strong incentive to do it better and efficiently exist. In govt backed bureaucracies this the opposite. It takes 100 people and weeks of meetings to change a light-bulb and a week to do it, at best. Wasteful incompetence is rampant.**

#2: The Drive for woke Diversity is a major force in hiring, particularly when it comes to management. The color of your skin and/or your gender play a significant role in who gets hired, retained and moved into management.

#3: Nepotism is rampant; it's who you know or blow. Lots of folks working there got their job through a family connection. That means lots of family dead wood.

#4: These job farms are almost always hiring to fill in the brain and experience drain. Good people get tired of the bureaucracy's 'cut the tall poppy' office and company politics, waste and inefficiencies, and leave (see #1). When all else fails in the job hunt, you can often find a placeholder spot in the defense industry to tide you over until finding better.

#5: So much of defense is just a "body shop." We have X amount of work to do, so let's throw Y number of bodies at it since we are paid by the nose or body count when billing blank check, cost plus contracts to GSA. No accounting for the skills and experience of the individual bodies or anything else; just labor charges on a bill of lading. Management regards individual contributors (i.e. your worker-bee engineers) as a large population of interchangeable widgets. It is paid by the numbers of noses not efficiency or ability to produce; hence the experience and brain drains of govt and its contractor mismanagement.

#6: When it comes times for layoffs and cuts, there is a distinct divide between management and individual contributors (see #5). If you're management, you're generally going to be OK. If you're an individual contributor, watch out. As a tall poppy, you are considered a liability to be shed that threatens the forest of dead wood, not an asset. Hence the brain and experience drain of office and company politics.

#7: The so-called "STEM shortage" is not and has never been real. It makes for a good press release, and scapegoat hiding mismanagement but there is no looming shortage of engineers, and there never has been. There is a shortage of good ones because companies are penny wise and dollar foolish in hiring numbers just to get paid by the nose not ability, quality or competent job experience.

#8: There is a phenomenal amount of long term "deadwood" working in defense and all govt bureaucracy, which is mostly just a political jobs farm paying people at a level above welfare or disability. Look over any sea of cubicles at a defense contractor, and it's a good bet that at least a 1/2 of those folks could be let go with absolutely no impact on the company. Typical of all govt non-essential employees whether managed by private contractors, unions or directly by GSA. Simply look at the release of non-essential govt employees during a US budget fight of useless eaters simply getting paid for doing nothing. Bean counters with fancy titles counting the same bean pile before moving it over to the next busy work employee doing nothing but looking busy.

#9: Defense is one of the few engineering fields that can't be off-shored, yet, due to the nature of the work and a need for people to have a security clearance. Very little threat of your job being sent to a 3rd world country, or being replaced by a cheaper H1B visa holder. But the world grows smaller and that is changing by AI, which can do most anything professionals can do better, faster and cheaper.

#10: There is no penalty for sucking at your job, just show up; the company is paid by the nose not output. Whether it's incompetence, or just plain laziness, apathy that drives someone's poor performance, people almost never get fired. Rather, you'll be shuffled around and hidden among the other dead wood until you're causing the minimum amount of damage (see #8). The stellar employee is a threat to mediocre bureaucracy. Great always is enemy to mediocre or good which stands out like a sore thumb. Cut the tall poppy coworker office politics destroys incentive to do a good or better job; it's safer to just invisibly ride the gravy train loafing at the lowest common denominator and blend in

with the deadwood. When in Rome do as the Romans do, in office politics do as the deadbeats do to blend in unnoticed.

#11: The Org Chart and union seniority list are King. The nature of defense being a jobs program (see #1) contributes to an incredibly deep military like chain of command and protocol. Often, you see as few as 5-6 people per manager, sometimes even fewer. The end result is a large number of managers and employees with minimal work or nothing to do getting paid killing time on the clock. This contributes to excessive, cut throat, coworker office politics. Things like an obsessive interest in the org chart, overtime doing nothing and who reports to whom. Constant infighting between groups, gossip, coworker backstabbing, coworker career sabotage, petty grievances between managers, their employees, and similar kinds of nonsense. There are often more “managers” directing the work than there are people actually doing the work; too many wheels few or no horses pulling the wagon. Most of it is just ‘look busy’ idle time to show realization on paper; figures lie and liars figure and any perception is possible on paper where reality doesn’t count or matter. There is always an excuse, scapegoat to blame for under-performance, mischarging and failure, if caught padding the billing to cover it up.

#12: Beware the boomerang. In some defense employees, success breeds contempt and incredible arrogance. See #11 Also, defense companies do a great job of marketing themselves as being leaders of industry when robbing the taxpayers deep pockets at the political pork trough. These two facts, along with high pay, especially among represented union staff, combine to lead many folks to think they can easily duplicate their success in the civilian world. Many times, they end up coming back to the warm dead wood embrace of defense, tail between their legs, after discovering the civilian world isn’t quite as easy and forgiving as unionized defense work robbing taxpayers. I recently read where a local defense plant represented employees, they are all the same, were on strike. It’s hard to find sympathy for hubris, self important, entitled, govt, overpaid employee union represented looterish with lush benefits robbing taxpayer’s, crying for more while doing less, while chanting pay us for breathing.

The Real History of Unions: Violent Communist Agitation – Americans for Fair Treatment

Teachers [Marxist, communist] unions want to mandate skewed labor history as part of curriculum in schools. Their goal is to improve the public’s perception of unions by showing skewed positive contributions that unions made to American workplaces at a time when labor conditions were less favorable. When most people think of unions in the 1800s and early 1900s, they likely think of how bad things were for workers; but then again, things were bad worldwide for everyone. They think of unsafe factories, long hours, and child labor. Against such harsh working conditions, **unions on the surface seem** like a welcome force for good, and unions often emphasize these noble beginnings. They remind us that unions fought for improved wages and safer, cleaner workplaces. However, **this does not represent the whole story – or “honest history” as American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten says.**

When **Karl Marx released *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848**, and *Das Kapital* in 1864, the early labor movement experienced a seismic shift. Previously, leading socialist thinkers did not like unions and thus organized labor had little to do with socialism. This changed with Marx, who believed that unions were an essential tool in class struggle.

The first international efforts at organizing workers were established by Marx himself. Marx led the International Working Men's Association (IWA), which was a coalition founded by **union leaders** in 1864, aimed at uniting various **leftist groups**, including **socialists, communists, and anarchists**, to join in the common goal of **defeating capitalism**.

In 1872, the IWA focused its efforts on the United States, moving its headquarters to New York City. After it disbanded in 1876, the Workingmen's Party of the United States (WPUS) was founded in its place. The WPUS organized railroad workers in the Great Railroad Strike of 1877, which started in West Virginia and spread across several states, leading to **deadly riots. Over one hundred people were killed** as a result, and in Philadelphia, **rioters burned down 39 buildings and dozens of trains, as well as over 1,200 freight cars**.

Unionization continued along Marxist lines, as did the violence. In 1886, after a confrontation between striking employees, strikebreakers, and police, a group of labor radicals (including anarchists and communists) held a rally in Chicago, now referred to as the Haymarket Riot. When one of the speakers at the rally shouted "Exterminate the capitalists!" police intervened, and things became violent. One rioter threw a stick of dynamite at police and shooting broke out; seven police officers and at least one civilian died.

The relationship between unions, rioting, and violence continued into the 1900s. In 1905, the American Labor Union, Socialist Party, and Socialist Labor Party together formed the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), a **radical** international union that called for all workers to unite under "One Big Union" and **overthrow capitalism**. In 1909, IWW organized rail workers for Pittsburgh's second **deadliest strike** (the first being the 1877 Great Railroad Strike), where between 12 and 26 people were killed, including a deputy sheriff. In 1916, **IWW members were involved in a massacre in Everett, Washington, now called "Bloody Sunday,"** where two deputies were killed, and 50 people were wounded.

In 1918, less than a year after communists overthrew the Russian government in the bloody October Revolution, IWW members were convicted for sedition in Chicago, and a bomb went off in the old Federal Building, killing four people—reportedly a young Walt Disney was almost killed in the bombing. Police believed that the union was responsible, though it denied involvement.

Violent communist agitation was a large part of early unionization in America, but **union officials don't claim ignorance of unions' historical ties to communism**. In 2011, Andy Stern, former president of the Services Employees International Union (SEIU), admitted that **unions have Marxist roots**. "In the '30s," he said, "people didn't want us to exist. We had to do sit-down strikes . . . we had **socialist and communist tendencies. We grew up, to speak in Marxist terms**, in a world with a lot more class struggle." **Modern Marxists, for their part, feel a similar warmth towards unions—they say that unions are useful to their goals, but not radical enough.**

As Weingarten noted in a recent interview, “80% of parents, most parents, want teachers to teach **honest history.**” **That’s exactly what should be taught—honest history.** Kids should know about the historical truth of organized labor, and how employees came together to improve their workplaces. They should also know that unionization in America was driven by violent, revolutionary Marxist organizations, and that unions often instigated and participated in Marxist, communist driven rioting, killing, bombing, terrorism and violence.

